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## **Who are the Boomers?**

There were 77 million people born between 1946 and 1964. The cohort that emerged from this baby boom is unique and diverse. The following data is intended to give a broad overview of the Baby Boomers. It should not be used to define the entire group.

### **Physical Health**

- Greater longevity
  - Life expectancy has increased 30 years over the past century (83 years for women; 79 years for men)
- More likely to exercise and much less likely to smoke
- More likely to be obese
  - 1/3 of men and 4/10 of women
- Detest labels evoking chronological age

*Source: Arias & Smith, 2003 NCHS, 1998 & Yankelovich, 2000*

### **Race Ethnicity**

- More ethnically and racially diverse
- 74% are white-non Hispanic
  - 81% of previous generation are white-non Hispanic

#### *African Americans and Hispanics:*

- More likely to cite religious considerations as a motivator for volunteering

#### *African Americans:*

- 41 % provide informal volunteering outside of formal helping organizations via extended informal, neighborhood- and family-based networks

#### *Hispanics cite motivation to:*

- Stay active
- Participate with friends and family
- Build a community resource that could later return benefits

**Location**

- More likely to live in cities
- 9 of 10 express a preference for staying at their current residence during later years

**Rural vs. Urban Challenges***Rural Issues*

- Oriented toward family activities
- Need for transportation

*Urban Issues*

- Rivalry with other non-profits
- Competing with entertainment and cultural opportunities

*Source: NCOA, 2004*

**Education**

- 30% college educated
  - 20% of previous generation is college educated

*Source: CPS, 2002*

**Technology**

- Almost 50% of boomers report “regularly” using the internet

**Income**

- More affluent but economically diverse
- Have more accumulated wealth as well as debt
- Large income range
  - Median household income \$62,300
  - 1 in 4 earning less than \$35,000/year
  - 10% are in poverty
- 75% came from poor, working class, family-run farms or small businesses
  - feel indebted to those persons or institutions
- Many feel their generation will need more money than their parents to live comfortably in retirement

**Family Status**

- 70% are married
- More likely to be divorced/ separated or never married
- As they age more likely to be in unmarried households
- 50% of all boomers have children under 18 living with them
- 65% of younger boomers have children under 18 living with them
- 30% report caring for an older parent

*Source: CPS, 2001 - AARP, 2001*

**Religious Affiliation**

- Lower level of religious affiliation than their predecessors

- Religious affiliation has traditionally been associated with volunteerism/service

**Labor Force Trends**

- Less than 5% have retired
- Almost 70% of workers over the age of 45 plan to continue working into retirement

*Source: AARP lifestyle survey, 2002a AARP,  
Staying Ahead of the Curve Survey, 2003b*